**Name**: Col. L’Estrange

**Occupation**: Lieutenant Colonel of 31st Regiment

**Home**: Not given

**Date**: April 8, 1822

**Source**: Redford v Birley, 468 - 474

**Summary**: Had command of Manchester region armed forces on day of Peterloo. Stationed troops as ‘best calculated to preserve the peace’. Received a letter (now lost) from Mr Hulton requiring the presence of the military ‘as he did not conceive the civil power was sufficiently strong for their purpose.’ His troops had to make a detour to arrive at the field, by so by the time they arrive the Yeomanry were already ‘in conflict’ with the people. Was asked by Mr Hulton to intervene to disperse the people and rescue the Yeomanry, and encountered resistance in doing so but ‘partial’ - ‘people were more desperate in one place than in another’. Own hat knocked off by a missile.

**Done by**: RM

Col. L’Estrange sworn; examined by Mr Serjeant Hullock.

Q. You are a Colonel in the army, and Lieutenant-Colonel of the 31st.

A. I am, sir.

Q. You had the command I believe.

A. I had, of the district and neighbourhood of Manchester.

Q. On this day?

A. The 16th. August.

Q. How long had you been in communication, as such, Commander, with the Magistrates, before the meeting?

A. For several days before. We marched in on the 6th., and I had been in communication generally from that time until the 16th.

Q. Was the subject of this communication the preservation of the peace?

A. It was.

Q. Did you receive from them information upon-the state of the country?

A. l did.

Q. Did you, in consequence of that information, adopt such measures as you thought were most likely to preserve the peace, by the distribution of your force—-the force under your command?

A. I did. The arrangements I had made were with a view to preserve the peace of the neighbourhood; by the direction of the Magistrates, I disposed the troops.

Q. Were the troops, including the Cheshire and Manchester Yeomanry, stationed in such places you thought best adapted ---

A. All the troops of, the garrison were stationed in such a manner, as I thought it would be most available in case of a riot.

Q. What regiments or troops had you, under your command on that day?

A. In the town; three companies of the 88th, about 250 of the 31st.

*Mr. Justine Holroyd*— Is this material?

*Mr. Serjeant Hullock*. -I am now asking of the troops under his command.

*Mr. Justice Holroyd*.—I don't know that this is at all necessary.

*Mr. Serjeant Hullock*.—I don’t know it is. I merely mentioned it, because some questions of the sort have been repeatedly put by my learned Friends.

Q. Were the troops stationed in such situations as were best calculated to preserve the peace, in case they were called on by the civil power?

A. They were.

Q. Where were you?

A. I was with two squadrons of the 15th. Hussars, and one squadron of the Cheshire Yeomanry, to which were added a troop of the Manchester Yeomanry, in Byrom-street.

Q. Whilst you were there, did you see any of the party — did you see Hunt's division pass?

A. I understood that Hunt was coming up along Deansgate, and I rode with Col Townshend, who commanded the Cheshire Yeomanry, to the corner of Deansgate, so as to see him pass. I

arrived just as he was passing.

Q. You were, of course, in regimentals?

A. I was in uniform.

Q. Was Col. Townshend also?

A. He was with me and Mr. Trafford the Magistrate.

Q. Was Col. Townshend in uniform also?

A. Yes, he was.

Q. Did any thing take place on their seeing you?

A. When the carriage came up, Hunt arose, or I don't know whether he had been standing before, but he was standing at the time he passed the corner; he stood up, waved his hat, looked at us, and again waved his hand to the mob, who answered with shouts, apparently of defiance. I suppose from seeing us in uniform.

Q. That was the impression upon your mind?

A. Exactly.

Q. Did you receive any communication, and about what time, from Mr. Hulton?

A. I think about a quarter of an hour, less than half an hour, after that, I received a letter by a messenger from Mr. Hulton, as chairman of the committee of Magistrates, stating that he required our attendance.

Q. You have lost the letter?

A. I have not been able to find the letter.

Q. Then you may go on, and state the contents as far as you remember?

A. Stating that he required the assistance of the military, as he did not conceive the civil power was sufficiently strong for their purpose.—I cannot recollect the words.

Q. That was the substance?

A. Yes, sir; and he stated in his commencement, "as chairman of the committee of Magistrates."

Q. If you were to see a letter that cams to a similar import, should you recollect the contents?

The letter to the commanding officer in Portland-street was then shewn to the witness.

A. Very likely I should. That is, as near as I can recollect, what he said on the subject. I think that was very nearly so – I dare say in the same words, probably. It was the purport. I then ordered the Hussars, the squadron of the Cheshire Yeomanry, and the troop of Manchester Yeomanry, to follow to the house which Mr. Hulton indicated. In order to reach his house without passing through the mob which was between me and it, I was obliged to make a detour, to go through Fleet-street through which we were guided by Mr. Withington. This was the reason that the Manchester two troops arrived before us, which was quite accidental.

*Mr. Serjeant Hullock*.— (Shewing a map.) —You see Gentlemen, the long detour.

*Witness.*— I originally supposed the Magistrates would have remained at the Star; but it was deemed best the military should come in the rear of the civil power, rather than in front of them, which obliged us to make the detour.

Q. Was it the Yeomanry, or the 15th. Hussars that arrived first?

A. We had two squadrons of Hussars in front; they were immediately followed by the others. There was some difference as to the period of their coming up, but I suppose they must have followed as close as the files could come up.

Q. Had you any opportunity, at the moment, of seeing where the troop, or the squadron of the Manchester Yeomanry that had gone up to the hustings, were?

A. When I arrived at the corner of the row of houses in which the Magistrates were placed, I saw a very considerable dust. It appeared to me, that the Yeomen were then in conflict with the people. I saw missiles in the air, but the Yeomen were not so near that I could speak to them; probably thirty or forty yards from me, or perhaps more, scattered and insulated amongst the people.

Q. In your judgment, do you think they were in danger at the time?

A. Certainly; for they were insulated amongst the people, and might have been thrown off their horses.

Q. Upon your going up to Mr. Buxton’s house, where was Mr. Hulton?

A. Mr. Hulton was at the window of the house the Magistrates were in; since, I have heard it was Mr. Buxton's; I looked up at the window, and asked for orders: he said, "look at the Yeomen” I believe, “good God! look at the Yeomen" or something to that effect, “save them, disperse the people," or "disperse the mob.”

Q. You immediately did so?

A. We immediately did so.

Q, Did you, in doing that, experience any resistance?

A. We did.

Q. Considerable resistance, did you?

A.- No; I cannot say considerable resistance, because the resistance was partial. It was occasionally as the people were more desperate in one place than in another. I had my cap struck off by a blow on the head.

Q. By what description of weapon, or in what way was that done?

A. I suppose it must have been by a large brickbat or stone; it was picked up by one of the Hussars.

*Cross-examined by Mr. Blackburne.*

Q. Where was you when this happened to you?

A. I had passed the hustings; I dare-say ten yards past the hustings.

Q. Did you see what had become of the Manchester Yeomanry that had gone on first, when you got up to the hustings?

A. We passed the hustings as rapidly as we could, from the house of the Magistrates, nearly to the end of the street.

Q. Nearly up to Peter-street?

A. Perhaps within twenty yards of it. I suppose we went, one hundred and twenty yards as fast as we could go.

Q. Then you did not perceive what they had done?

A. I conceived they had joined us in the pursuit.

Q. You did not see?

A. We were at a gallop, and it was impossible for me. I told you at the beginning they were insulated.

Q. You say you were at a gallop the whole way?

A. We did not go the whole way; we went the greater part of half the distance between the hustings and the extreme end of the ground. We checked as we came towards the end, for the people were in a greater mass. As we got near the end, we endeavoured more to check the men; in short to prevent mischief, as much as we could.

Q. How many troops were there in Manchester and the immediate neighbourhood at that time?

A. There were 421 of the Cheshire Yeomanry, who came in that morning at eleven o'clock. We had three squadrons of Hussars, two pieces of light artillery, 250 of the 31st., and 160 of the 88th., speaking in round numbers; besides two troops of the Manchester. There was a squadron at Oldham also ready to quit, and at that time on the road, in case of necessity.

Q. Altogether, you would have about 1000 men?

A. I dare say we had.

Q. Where were the 31st. stationed?

A. They were stationed in Brazennose-street.

Q. What was the body in Dickinson-street?

A. The 88th.

Q. Did the Yeomanry form afterwards in Peter-street?

A. I cannot say; for after having passed to the end of the ground, I returned to the house, in which the Magistrates were, which I entered; and the squadron went with the prisoners to gaol.

Q. And you did not cross Peter-street at all?

A. I did not go into Peter-street myself.

Q. Nor did not cross it?

A. I should have had to go down it, if you will observe the map.

Q. If you were to go to the Quakers' school, you would have to cross it?

A. I went from the house in which the Magistrates were, to a part of Peter-street in a line with Quay-street.